

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appl. No. 09/756,880

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 8 is withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 1-7 and 9-12 presently stand rejected.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended, and claims 6 and 11 (the features of which are now included in claim 1) are canceled.

As recited in claim 1, the present invention is concerned with a pneumatic tire for four-wheeled vehicles. By way of contrast, JP '210 and JP '925 are concerned with a pneumatic tire for motorcycles, i.e., two-wheeled vehicles.

In tires for four-wheeled vehicles, cornering force is generated by applying a slip angle (SA) to the tire. By way of contrast, in tires for two-wheeled vehicles, cornering force is generated by applying a camber thrust (CT) to the tire. Tires for two-wheeled and four-wheeled vehicles fundamentally differ in the structure and mechanism of the sidewall portion as well as the deformation mode for generating the cornering force. Also, the technical concepts and performances of tires for four-wheeled vehicles are entirely different from tires for two-wheeled vehicles.

Therefore, the present invention is not believed to be particularly relevant with respect to JP '210 and JP '925. Given the differences discussed above, Applicant submits that the Examiner's reliance on these disparate references amounts to an improper use of hindsight.

In the present invention, the circumferential rigidity (K_t) is improved by a reinforcing cord layer without increasing the radial rigidity (K_r) to improve the steering stability, and the

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rigidity of the tire as a whole is enhanced by the reinforcing sheet rubber to further improve the steering stability. According to the present invention, the steering stability of the tire is improved by simultaneously arranging the reinforcing cord layer and the reinforcing sheet rubber.

The reinforcing sheet rubber according to the invention has a hardness substantially equal to that of the bead filler rubber (see, e.g., paragraphs [0005] and [0033] of the specification), which can further increase the tire rigidity. The use of the reinforcing sheet rubber is preferable (as compared to providing the reinforcing cord layer by itself) to improve the steering stability.

Ueyoko discloses the use of sheet rubber for the prevention of ply separation on column 5, lines 16 to 22. However, this sheet rubber is actually a "cushion rubber", and thus it provides a cushioning action and has a hardness "different" (lower) than that of the bead filler rubber, and does not serve to enhance the tire rigidity. This is in direct contrast to the reinforcing sheet rubber of the present invention.

Therefore, the present invention is different from Ueyoko et al. with respect to the object, function and effect of the sheet rubber.

The other references also fail to teach or suggest the combination of the reinforcing cord layer and the reinforcing sheet rubber as defined in the present invention, and thus these references, taken alone or in combination with Ueyoko, neither teach nor suggest the invention in claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore believed to be allowable, and the remaining claims are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

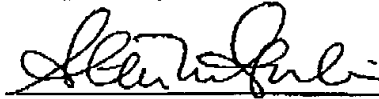
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Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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